

# BUFFALO DISTRICT OFFICE NEWS

MARCH 2010

## DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S CORNER

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Success Story: Edible Arrangements	1
Edible Arrangements Cont.	2
International Trade	2
Staff Directory	2
Business Matchmaker, Awards Luncheon & Exposition	3
In Memory: Scott Smith	4
SBA Export Loan Programs	4

## FEBRUARY 2010

### Lending Reports Available

Reports can be viewed at:

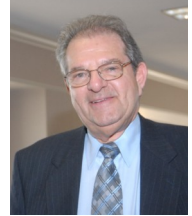
[www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo](http://www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo)

Helping small businesses  
**start, grow and succeed.**



Your Small Business Resource

## Edible Arrangement Fruit Bouquets a Fresh Idea for Larry & Gail Gephardt



Franklin J. Sciortino  
District Director

Sometimes an idea is so simple that all you need is the inspiration to move forward. For example, opening a franchise around the idea that fruit, a healthy and nutritious treat could be sold as an all occasion product. Or that fruit could be made into a bouquet. Larry and Gail Gephardt had this vision and opened Edible Arrangements, a franchise business specializing in designing fresh fruit bouquets that look like floral arrangements in 2004.

With 20 years of business experience, Larry left his job with a manufacturing castings company to start Edible Arrangements. His wife, a real estate agent, who shared his entrepreneurial spirit, joined him in this new venture. However, the company needed assistance with their business plan. They turned to the Niagara Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) which showed them how to manage the business, how to focus and identify true business profit and how to prepare the cash flow methodology as a guide for valuation.

"Tom Bruss, SBDC business advisor made it simple, while we worked on the actual concepts of the business, he prepared the plan." "We were never bogged down," said Larry Gephardt.

As they worked with the SBDC, Larry and Gail were able to position themselves to obtain a SBA loan through HSBC Bank to start the franchise in 2004. Gail credits HSBC Bank and SBA programs with helping them become successful. "Unique in the industry, the Gephardt's have demonstrated an ability to operate Edible Arrangements as evidenced by the current franchise location's successful operations and revenue growth since operation, said Brandon Minsterman, AVP and business relationship manager, HSBC Bank.



In business just five years and despite the current economic conditions, the Gephardt's received a second SBA loan from HSBC Bank and opened a second location in Depew, New York. As part of SBA's recovery efforts, SBA has the ability to provide small business loans that are enhanced with special provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), including a higher guarantee of SBA-backed loans and a waiver of loan fees normally paid by borrowers. The Gephardt's saved over \$2,560 in guaranty fees.

Continued next page **Edible Arrangements**

## District Staff

District Director  
Franklin J. Sciortino

Deputy District Director  
Victoria Reynolds

Government Contracting/  
Business Development  
Laura McCabe  
Pamela Andolina

Lender Relations  
Paul Hoffman  
Barbara Krieger

Administration  
Sheila Haggerty

Public Information Officer  
Kelly LoTempio

Entrepreneurial  
Development  
Donald Butzek

District Counsel  
Mollie B. Gaughan

## Rochester Branch Staff Directory

Branch Manager  
Malcolm Richards

Procurement Analyst  
Joyce Spears

Program Support  
Specialist  
Tammi Bennett

## Edible Arrangements Continued

"Going through the SBA is not something you think about, but, after going through the process it was easier than we thought. SBA was friendly and made the process seamless." said Larry.

Beginning operations with five employees at their Williamsville location, the Gephardt's today employ more than 16 employees in two stores. An award winning company, Edible Arrangements has a store presence in 45 states in the U.S. Edible Arrangements ranked 139<sup>th</sup> out of America's 5000 fastest growing private companies according to Entrepreneur's magazine. Locally, EA was ranked top five in the nation for sales in 2007 and top 10 (Williamsville location) out of 73 in New York state.

For more information, visit [www.ediblearrangements.com](http://www.ediblearrangements.com) and type in 14221 for Williamsville or 14043 for Depew.

*"This article and the accompanying photographs do not constitute or imply an endorsement by SBA of any opinions, products or services of any private individual or entity."*

## International Trade

The SBA Buffalo District Office International Trade Task Force met on March 5. The meeting was held at the Canadian Consulate and was hosted by Margaret Lange, consul & trade commissioner. Committee members listened Michael Flaherty, consul & senior trade commissioner who addressed the Canada-US Relationship "Our Competitive Advantage in a Challenging World".



## Increase Your International Sales

**Tuesday, April 20, 2010**

**UB Center for Tomorrow**

**FREE Event**

**Come discover innovative products to increase your profits, enhance your cash flow, and minimize your risks when doing business internationally.**

**Register by calling (716) 856-6754 or e-mail ([lhendriz@ecidany.com](mailto:lhendriz@ecidany.com))**

## SBA Business Matchmaker & Expo

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

7:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.

Buffalo Niagara Convention Center

Presented by the U.S. Small Business Administration, SCORE Buffalo Niagara, and Business First of Buffalo, is hosting its 5th Annual Western New York event in Buffalo, New York on **Wednesday, May 12, 2010**.

The event will combine education, training, counseling, networking, and face-to-face meetings between small businesses and procurement representatives from government agencies and major corporations. View our brochure at [www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo](http://www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo).

If you are interested in participating in this exciting event, please contact either Kelly LoTempio, SBA at (716) 551-4301 Ext. 309 - [Kelly.lotempio@sba.gov](mailto:Kelly.lotempio@sba.gov) or Laura McCabe at (716) 551-4301 Ext. 310 – [laura.mccabe@sba.gov](mailto:laura.mccabe@sba.gov) in Buffalo or Joyce Spears in Rochester at (585) 263-6700 ext. 105 – [joyce.spears@sba.gov](mailto:joyce.spears@sba.gov)

**Business Matchmaker** - Business Matchmaking area provides face-to-face meetings between procurement representatives from federal, state, and local governments as well as prime contractors from 7:00-12:15 p.m.

**Exposition** - Several exhibitors from the public and private sectors will provide information and offer opportunities to network from 8:00-3:00 p.m.

**SBW Luncheon** - The SBA Buffalo District Small Business Week will be celebrated at a luncheon supported by the SBA, SCORE Buffalo Niagara, and Business First of Buffalo May 12 from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$40.00 per person/Tables of 10.

**Free Seminar**– “Selling to the Government” presented by Larry Hillebrand will explain the ins and outs of federal government purchasing procedures. Seminar will be offered from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. and from 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

### Client Testimonial

Bravo and congratulations to you and the SBA on presenting an outstanding event, Kelly!

From an attendee's perspective, the SBA's Business Matchmaker and Expo was a tremendous success. It is my hope that everything behind the scenes ran as seamlessly as they did for all who participated and attended.

We had the opportunity to meet with every vendor we selected. We made some great "matches" and also found that even if there was not a specific match for our services, every vendor was courteous, informative and a pleasure to meet with. You provided a comprehensive offering of seminar topics and outstanding presenters, and my only regret was that we were not able to attend all of them. The "open-floor" concept this time around was a great change and was extremely manageable.

I must also compliment you with regard to the Awards Luncheon. It was great to hear about the successes of the many honorees. It was well presented, well paced and the lunch itself was great.

Again, congratulations to you and your SBA team. I appreciate that this was a tremendous undertaking, however you rose to the challenge and even exceeded expectations. Very well done! Madonna Spittler, CityMade/CELOX Blood Clotting Products

## In Memory Scott Smith SCORE Buffalo



## SBA EXPORT LOAN PROGRAMS

- **Export Working Capital Program (EWCP)**
- **Export Express**
- **International Trade Loans**

The "world is flat" and small businesses are participating in the world economy in record numbers. Consider the following

- 70% of all exporters have fewer than 20 employees
- Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) account for 30% of export value
- SMEs exported over \$300 Billion worth of merchandise in 2008.

How can you support these growing businesses and their need for capital while still maintaining prudent lending standards? SBA participating lenders are invited to learn how to use SBA export finance programs to provide these growing businesses with financing solutions while still maintaining an acceptable level of risk. This training will be provided by Patrick Hayes, SBA's Regional Export Finance Manager. Please join us:

### Teleconference

When: April 1, 2010, 9:00 am EST – 10:00 am.

Dial in instructions:

1-866-740-1260; passcode 3755002

[www.readytalk.com](http://www.readytalk.com); pass code 3755002

Questions – call Patrick Hayes on 216-522-4731 or Patrick.hayes@sba.gov